

Sverres vals

Sverres vals is a combination of regular waltz steps and measures of stepping only on cts 1 and 3. Sverre Halbakken says this way of dancing was common in the Elverum area at dance parties when he was young. In that area, I myself have seen this dance or variants of it performed by dancers who are not part of organized folk dancing.

I was originally exposed to the dance at Scandia Camp Mendocino in 1980 with Sverre and Solveig Halbakken. It was extremely difficult to understand how Solveig was able to follow his leads, and both Roo Lester and I made several attempts. We also filmed them in the 1980s. It was only after working with other dances that include walking steps that I was able to figure out what was going on.

Music: Any waltz at a Scandinavian tempo (i.e. not a slow waltz).

Formation: Couples holding ballroom position.

Steps: Waltz: step on L (ct 1), step on R (ct 2), step on L (ct 3).
Alternatively, do a hesitation step: step on L (ct 1), touch R ball beside L (ct 2), bounce (ct 3). Whether you take 3 steps or do a hesitation step is entirely individual and may vary from one measure to the next depending on how far you need to travel. The svikt is down on 1 and 3, i.e. down-up-down. (Of course, you have to come up on 3& to repeat, but this is not accented.)

Stegvals: step on R (ct 1), step on L (ct 3). W uses opp ftwk.

Fig Pattern

- 1 *Waltz*
Dance regular waltz CCW around the room.

The main waltz pattern includes “vindusvisker” (windshield wiper) patterns as well as turning. Vindusvisker: start facing LOD with R fwd. Use two waltz steps to turn 1/2 CW. Then starting back with R, use two waltz steps to turn 1/2 CW. This turning back and forth is the same basic turning technique as in a simple foxtrot. Some men also do not move straight in LOD, but zig-zag in and out of the circle.

- 2 *Backing up with stegvals steps*
Man turns twd outside of circle, and pushes W away from ctr on ct 1 of a R-footed meas. At the same time, he holds her tighter and closer. He continues backing up diagonally twd center and LOD on L (ct 3), R (ct 1), L (ct 3). He generally stops on the third meas, doing a hesitation step bkwd R on the third meas. During this meas he may turn slightly CCW.

He could conceivably continue bkwd for more measures, but there are no examples of it on our film. The W knows he is stopping because of his deceleration in LOD and because he usually only backs up for 2 meas.

After stopping, the next meas is fwd on M L. If he has turned slightly, this meas will be toward the outside of the circle. (If not, as in several examples in our film, he moves in RLOD – definitely not recommended on a crowded dance floor.)

- 3 *Turning with stegvals steps*
Use the same transition as in part 2, but begin to spin CW quickly. Step around the W with L (ct 3). Continue for 2-3 more measures: step twd W on R (ct 1), step around W on L (ct 3). This turn continues to move in LOD.

Stop by doing a R hesitation step fwd toward W. She senses the deceleration in the speed of turning. Following this he usually swings further CCW on the L step, and then bkwd on the next R changing rotation direction. He then continues to rotate CW or does more “vindusvisker”.

Sequence

The dance begins with figure 1, which is the main part of the dance. Every once in a while, the M intersperses figure 2 or figure 3.

Presented by Alix Cordray